

Is tech trashing your eyesight?

Value your vision and adopt these practices

BY DAN SEIDMAN

Your eyesight is deteriorating, not because you're old, but because your technology is new.

The light coming from your digital devices is known as blue light and is incredibly damaging to your eyes. How harmful? Medical professionals believe we are looking at an oncoming epidemic of blindness, preceded by cataracts and macular degeneration. Most at risk? Millennials first, then all of you older business pros who spend 10 hours a day in front of computers, smart phones and flat-panel TVs.

Here are details about the medical issues related to blue light. You'll also read some wise practices to eliminate most, if not all, of the trouble that can accrue from your exposure.

LED lights are hot right now, but not the right kind of hot. They are digital light sources, not thermal. This means they lack the healthy, warm color frequencies that emulate the light of the sun. Instead, these artificial lights use what we call blue and violet (or UV) wavelengths that penetrate past the protective layers (lens and cornea) of your eye, and can damage your retina. Two recent 10-year studies on cataracts and macular degeneration have shown an increase of 20 to 25 percent in these medical issues.

Studies also reveal that exposure to UVs prior to bedtime disrupts deep REM sleep. This is where your body does rest and recovery in a big way, each day. Mess with this and you upset hormones, mood, even memory. No one can afford to miss healthy sleep.

What can you do? Let's look at three ways to protect yourself.

Diet

Nourish your eyes with food and supplements that support eye health like lutein, zeaxanthin and astaxanthin. Mama was right when she recommended green leafy vegetables. Top of the list is kale, then spinach, orange bell peppers, egg yolks and wild Alaskan salmon. Bilberries are excellent for the eyes. In fact, British pilots in WWII ate them to improve their night vision. Organic food is healthier. You can also buy lutein, zeaxanthin and astaxanthin in capsule form. But you gotta eat. So you'll support your vision best with food.

Personal practices

Implement the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes shift your eyes from the computer at least 20 feet away, for at least 20 seconds.

Blink! An average adult blinks 16-18 times a minute. At your computer screen you forget and that number is cut in half.



Lubricate your eyes, blink more.

Get your sleep. Healthy sleep increases your energy during the day. Consider leaving your smart phone out of the bedroom.

Technology counter measures

Amber-colored glasses block blue light, when you're in front of screens. Uvex Skyper and Nature Bound are good ones (Amazon.com).

Consider getting rid of LED bulbs. I don't turn fluorescents on at work. Remember our older, clear incandescent bulbs? They are better for you, though now banned in the U.S.

Increase the text size on your screen to reduce eye strain.

Filter blue light, actively on your computer screen. You can buy physical filters, but I love *Iris Mini*, a free program that eliminates the blue light from your screen before and after daylight hours.

Do you really need to check your smart phone 100 times a day? Yes, that's the statistic that plagues us all.

Please do everything possible to keep those beautiful eyes strong and healthy for years to come. What will you do here first? It will make a difference! **smm**

Dan Seidman of GOT INFLUENCE? values his vision on the basketball court and in the classroom. Dan received the International Sales Training Leader of the Year in 2013 for his work developing the 544-page Ultimate Guide to Sales Training. Is your training truly improving sales team performance? It's time to redesign! Contact Dan at Dan@GotInfluenceInc.com or 847-359-7860.